



SLO Newsday

School Liaison Officer Newsletter for Nellis and Creech AFB Communities

Vol. 3, Issue 2

News You Can Use

Tuition-based extended day kindergarten at Lomie G. Heard Elementary School again is under consideration since Nevada does not provide funding for extended day or "all-day" kindergarten in all elementary schools. The program offers 5-year-old students the chance to attend school all day as opposed to "half-day." **The yearly rate to participate is \$2,700.** School administrators are asking parents to complete a brief survey and return it to Lomie Heard by **Friday, Feb. 11.** You can obtain the survey at Lomie Heard or by [emailing the SLO](#).

Lomie G. Heard Kindergarten Roundup is scheduled for **March 25** for children zoned to attend Heard during the 2011-2012 school year. *Prospective students whose name begins with letter A-L may visit the school anytime 9-11:30 am. All others should go between 1-3 pm.* Attendees should bring each child's original birth certificate, updated immunization record, and proof of address (e.g. housing letter, top copy of lease, or Nellis Cable or Direct TV bill). Families not living in base housing who plan to request a zone variance also are welcome to attend the Roundup. **However, attendance does not guarantee approval of your request.** Parents will not receive notification of approval or denial of zone variance requests until August.

Nevada State High School (NSHS), a local charter school, will host eight information sessions for the 2011-2012 school year. These information sessions are scheduled for:

- Feb 2 5 pm & 7 pm
- March 3 5 pm & 7 pm
- April 7 5 pm & 7 pm
- April 26 5 pm & 7 pm

These presentations will be held in the NSHS classroom located inside the Wells Fargo Building. The address is **112 South Water Street, Henderson, NV 89015.** The information sessions will inform parents and students about what NSHS provides students and how NSHS differs from a traditional high school. Anyone interested in learning more about NSHS can visit earlycollgenv.com or follow NSGS on facebook at **Nevada State High School**, or on twitter at twitter.com/NevadaStateHS.

Agassi Prep Accepting Applications Now

[Andre Agassi College Preparatory Academy](#)

is now accepting applications through March 18 for the 2011-2012 school year, which can be completed online at <http://www.agassiprep.org/admissions/> or via a paper application. Military members interested in the latter can obtain an application from the [School Liaison Officer \(SLO\)](#).

Agassi Prep is one of 14 charter schools presently operating in southern Nevada, which means it is a tuition-free public school anyone can attend. In that regard, Agassi Prep is much like Clark County School District (CCSD) schools. The contrast with CCSD lies in the way it operates. Agassi Prep does not follow CCSD policies, so consequently they have the freedom to increase student achievement as they see fit in exchange for higher accountability. Failure to meet the goals outlined in their "charter" can mean school closure.

Of course, Agassi Prep has not come close to a shutdown since opening their doors to grades three to five in 2001. In fact, just the opposite has happened at the school founded by Hall of Fame tennis player, Andre Agassi. Today, the school teaches children in grades k-12, and graduated their first class of seniors in June 2009 – most of whom were accepted to colleges.

"The success we've experienced really stems from our founders' original mission to provide a legitimate and quality educational option to local families who wanted it," said Agassi Prep Chief Operating Officer Chris Smith.

Smith said their vision has quickly turned into an elementary, middle, and high school that teaches more than 650 students with the hope of adding more.

Agassi Prep is receiving plenty of help from the community to add to rolls with hundreds of applicants applying for limited openings. More than 200 applicants applied for 38 kindergarten openings last year, and Smith expects a comparable number this year.

"It's one of the reasons we use the lottery to select new students," explained Smith. "We want to be as fair as possible to every

applicant and a lottery system is the best way to ensure that."

The lottery system is explained in detail at the Agassi Prep website, but essentially the program works as the state-approved guidelines dictate, which states "If more pupils who are eligible apply to [Agassi Prep] for enrollment for the school year than the number of spaces which are available, [Agassi Prep] shall determine

which applicants to enroll on the basis of a lottery system.

These state approved guidelines establish the following enrollment priorities and allowances (listed in order of priority):

- ✓ Applicants economically disadvantaged with siblings attending Agassi Prep, during the school year, and living within a two-mile radius of Agassi Prep
- ✓ Applicants economically disadvantaged and living within a two-mile radius of Agassi Prep
- ✓ Applicants with siblings attending Agassi Prep, during the school year and living within a two-mile radius of Agassi Prep
- ✓ Applicants living within a two-mile radius of Agassi Prep
- ✓ Applicants with siblings attending Agassi Prep during the school year
- ✓ Applicants economically disadvantaged and living beyond a two-mile radius of Agassi Prep
- ✓ All remaining applicants

The consultant-run, electronic lottery is as transparent as possible, according to Smith, who said it will happen **April 21**, quickly followed by letters sent to all applicants informing them of their status. Smith said everyone who applied will be placed on a "wait list" that rank orders applicants based upon their lottery number. That number indicates when, and if, the child gains admission to Agassi Prep.

Anyone interested in learning more about Agassi Prep selection process is invited to attend their lottery information sessions scheduled for **8 am and 5:30 pm, Thursday, Feb. 24** at the Andre Agassi Preparatory Academy.



Agassi Prep hopes to add more students to their high school, which has room for growth.

Somerset Academy Set to Become Valley's Newest Charter School This Fall

It is now official. The state board of education's recent approval of the school charter submitted by [Somerset Academy of Las Vegas](#) will make it southern Nevada's 15th charter school this fall, and one of only two in the northwest section of the Las Vegas Valley where many military families call home.

"We are really excited about the prospect of welcoming students this fall," said Wendi Jensen, a member of the board of directors and a former middle school teacher. "We worked very hard these past several months developing what we think will be a school many parents will find a good alternative to traditional education in the Las Vegas Valley. It is very gratifying to have that pay off with the approval of our charter."

Somerset Academy will begin as a school for grades kindergarten through eighth grade, according to Jensen, including full and half day kindergarten classes. Jensen said Somerset Academy chose to buck the trend of opening the school with only a few elementary grades like most new charter schools, deciding instead to include a middle school because of the need Somerset Academy founders noticed when planning the school.

The temporary location for Somerset's inaugural year (2011-2012) is still being finalized, with a permanent location planned near the intersection of Buffalo Drive and Grand Teton, which is just north of CCSD's Arbor View High School. Jensen said a Henderson location at Horizon Ridge Parkway and Gibson also is planned for the 2011-2012 school year.

"Like most charter schools, Somerset Academy will provide an educational environment that is flexible and innovative, that values productive experimentation, and that promotes a solid educational foundation many have not found in traditional public schools," explained Jensen. "Everyone



Somerset Academy of Las Vegas
Our mission is to prepare students for social, academic and career knowledge through effective teaching and life-long learning.

Northwest Las Vegas Charter School-Grades K-8, Opening for the 2011-12 school year

- Tuition FREE public charter school
- 9 month school year
- Convenient location, Buffalo and Grand Teton, just north of Arbor View High School
- Spanish instruction in every grade
- Full & half-day kindergarten
- Uniformed standard student attire
- Differentiated instruction
- Challenging curriculum, along with well-researched and effective teaching methods
- Smaller, more personal school setting
- Parental involvement
- Extra 1 hour of instruction each day, 8:30am-3:15pm
- Comega Math Tutor Program

Visit us at www.somersetacademyoflasvegas.com

The temporary site for Somerset Academy is near Commerce Street and Centennial Parkway. The permanent campus will be located St Buffalo Drive and Grand Teton, just north of Arbor View High School.

who works for us will have a year-to-year contract because we're seeking teachers and administrators who are results-oriented and outcome driven. We will hire people who want to be evaluated for their ability to teach well and to provide an environment conducive to learning."

Evidenced by the hundreds of families who have accessed the [website](#) to complete the "letter of intent" form, many have heard the clarion call from Somerset Academy and appear anxious to attend this fall, said Jensen.

Those who have submitted letters of intent to Somerset should receive an email from the school soon announcing the official charter, followed by another update within the next couple of months. Jensen said the initial selection will be "first come, first served," so anyone interested in attending this fall is encouraged to visit the website as soon as possible.

Jensen plans to visit the Nellis and Creech communities sometime this spring, probably in March, to share with military members the latest information about Somerset Academy of Las Vegas.

Hot Topics

CHALLENGER SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE: Military families interested in pursuing private school as an educational option should feel free to visit the [Challenger School](#) Open House scheduled for **Tuesday, Feb. 8**. Visit the website or call **(702) 878-6418** for more information.

NEVADA HOMESCHOOL NETWORK SYMPOSIUM: Nevada Homeschool Network (NHN) is scheduled to host its 3rd Annual Home School Symposium **8am - 5:30pm Friday, Feb. 25**. Among the topics scheduled for this year's NHN Symposium are: The Biology of Learning and Behavior; Teaching the Right Brained Child; and NV Law and Homeschool Choices. Anyone interested in attending the Carson City conference should [click here](#) to learn more.

NOSC SCHOLARSHIPS: Nellis Officers' Spouses' Club (NOSC) is sponsoring academic achievement scholarships for graduating high school seniors and dependent military spouses who exhibit potential and desire to complete a program leading to a college degree. **Scholarships will range from \$750 up to \$2000.** Eligibility requirements and application packets are available at high school guidance offices, Nellis Education Office, A&FRC, Nellis Library, and Thrift Shop. *All applications must be postmarked no later than March 2 and mailed to: NOSC Scholarship Awards, c/o Ms Sarah Johnson-Robles—Scholarship Chairman, P. O. Box 9785, Nellis AFB NV 89191.* For more information, call Sarah Johnson-Robles at **(702) 656-2435** or e-mail her at SarahJR4NOSC@aol.com.

GEN. HENRY H. ARNOLD EDUCATION GRANT: The Air Force Aid Society (AFAS) offers need-based \$2,000 undergraduate studies grants to children of: active-duty members, Title 10 Air Guard Reserve(AGR)/Reserve, Title 32 AGR performing full-time active duty, retired, retired reserve and deceased Air Force members, spouses (stateside) of active-duty members and Title 10 AGR/Reservists, and surviving spouses of deceased personnel. *Senior NCOs and officers are highly encouraged to apply. This program is tailored for Air Force families with college students. The application deadline is March 11.* Go to www.afas.org/ to learn more.

FREE, ONLINE TUTORING: DoD has launched an online tutoring service for servicemembers and their families. The site - <http://www.tutor.com/military> - offers round-the-clock professional tutors who can assist with homework, studying, test preparation, resume writing and more.

FREE GROUP TUTORING: The Nellis Youth Center is offering free group tutoring. The cost for individualized tutoring is \$7.50 per session. Call **(702) 652-9307** to learn more.

Nellis, Creech Families Learn About CCSD Magnets, CTAs



CCSD Magnet School Director Christine Gross briefed nearly 90 Nellis and Creech members and their families during the Second Annual CCSD Magnet School and Career and Technical Academy (CTA) Information Session Jan. 19 at the new Nellis Housing Community Center.

The deadline for submitting applications for all magnet schools and CTAs is 5 pm Monday, Feb. 7 (no exceptions). You can apply online by visiting <http://ccsd.net/magnetcta/> or completing a paper application and mailing it to CCSD Magnet/CTA Department, 2298 Vegas Valley Drive, Las Vegas, Nevada 89169.

Anyone with problems completing the application or anyone with questions about the process should contact the Magnet and CTA Department at **(702) 799-8492** or email them at magnetschools@interact.ccsd.net.